

China.

Seventy-fifth

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HANGCHOW COLLEGE

Seventy-fifth
Anniversary
Series

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REV. DING LI MEI,

A graduate of Shantung Christian University and a Powerful Evangelist

“CHINA’S ONLY HOPE”

CHRISTIAN YOUTH

I. REV. J. W. LOWRIE

The most interesting and significant recent event in North China missionary circles is, perhaps, the conference of students gathered last summer, not from mission schools but from the halls of non-Christian government advanced schools and colleges which have sprung up these recent years like spears of wheat on the soil of Tientsin, Peking and populous centers generally.

Ingeniously and sagaciously devised was the prospectus of the conference, and, being largely the work of a young Presbyterian, it is meet that it should be mentioned, and the more so that our North China Mission contributed one of its junior members to the corps of lecturers and instructors, composed of several prominent Christian Chinese and representatives of nearly every mission in Peking.

One should, perhaps, offer a slight apology for mentioning that the author of the programme was a Presbyterian, for, being a member of the Y. M. C. A., under whose auspices the conference was held, he naturally would be as chary of divulging his denominational extraction as a Buddhist priest is of disclosing his family surname or his honorable age.

A very attractive booklet was prepared in the Chinese and English languages mentioning the locality, the large ancient monastery of the Sleeping Buddha, planted amongst the hills near Peking, and publishing the varied and inviting conference programme—a *menu* of themes so timely and enlightening as to entice the most conservative student to the spot, if not to rouse the colossal form of the Great Enlightener himself from his age long slumber. And

thousands of these booklets were circulated amongst the institutions of learning in Peking and its vicinity.

Look at the daily order of events as actually carried out.

6:30 A. M. First Bell.

7:00- 8:00. Lectures. The Modern View of the World.

8:15- 8:45. Breakfast.

9:00-10:00. Group classes studying Christianity.

10:30-11:30. Lectures. Problems of China.

12:00-12:30. Meeting of Bible Class Leaders (Private).

12:30. Lunch.

3:00. Athletics.

5:45- 6:15. Prayer Meeting (attendance voluntary).

6:15- 7:00. Supper.

7:00- 7:45. Life work meetings.

8:30-10:00. Social amusements.

Among the lectures on the "Modern View of the World" were expounded such themes as Christianity and Other Creeds, Religious Belief and the Modern View of the World, The Religious Views of Some of the World's Great Men, The Theistic View of the Universe.

The group classes studied the Life of China, Christian Teaching in Outline, Fundamental Christian Conceptions and Growth in the Christian Life.

The lectures on Problems of China discussed China's Educational Problem, Her Industrial Development, The Power of the Press in the Life of a Nation, Public Health and Sanitation, The opportunities and Duties of Citizenship, Social Science among Students, Steps in the Recent History of China and The Relation of Religion to Reform.

The life work addresses treated of the Teacher, Business Man, Literary Man,

Physician, The Mandarin, The Philanthropist and Social Worker, The Scientist and Engineer, and closed with a lecture on The Student's Place in China's Progress.

When the conference met there were found to be 38 men from schools of every name in Peking and Tientsin and Paotingfu, none, however, under mission auspices. Eighteen of these young men were unacquainted with the Bible, 14 had slight acquaintance with it, and 6 were Christians; all of them, you may rest assured, were intensely eager for China's advancement.

They mingled sociably for eight days with very choice and able Christian men of their own race (who, it is interesting to note, made the deepest impression upon them) and with picked young men of the West. They listened to the carefully prepared addresses upon those living and absorbing themes, and heard in a conversational way of the much misundertstood, and, in some cases, much condemned, Christian Gospel. They strolled and ran and wrestled and laughed together, and as the eight strenuous days drew to a close Christ Jesus, for many, had taken on new proportions and a new interest, and his kingdom had assumed a new relation to the welfare of their own, as well as to themselves.

The blending of the highly intellectual with the spiritual, the practical and the social, and this with well-considered, cumulative emphasis on that which reveals the Lord Almighty did not fail to arrest the hearts of some of the more serious and open-minded, as some of their questions and testimonies noted below give evidence.

In the group classes for the study of Christianity, perfect freedom was, of course, allowed the students to ask questions, thereby exciting such questions as these:

"Is the God we learn of through the

world the same that we find in Christianity?"

"How do you account for religious wars in Europe?"

"Why are western nations not thoroughly Christian?"

"Who created God?"

"If a man unconsciously did evil and then realized it, is he then to be guilty of sin?"

"Can we have any material knowledge of God's love?"

"Must we love God or our nation most?"

"Was there a Son of God before Christ?"

And many others born of a reverent interest in the great theme before them.

Nor less interesting were the written replies to the question, "What benefits have you received at this conference?"

One says, "Infinite advantage in that I have decided in this conference to take Christ as Lord." Another, "I know the real need of a nation is purity of its individuals, and Christianity would help men to be pure." Another, "The enthusiasm of Christian people may be judged from this conference." Another, "Very great; but I may mention that I begin to understand Christianity from this conference." Another at some length, "I have enjoyed the rambles on the hills and visits to the temples. In body, mind and spirit I feel that I have improved. For two years I have studied Christianity. I thought the Christians in school were fools. I liked to argue with them. They often silenced my arguments. I was glad to come here to consider the subject. I had many doubts. Day before yesterday I decided to acknowledge Christ as my Lord and Saviour. Formerly I used to revile the church. Why do I now wish to belong to it? Have I taken medicine [that bewitches]? Of course not. In our school there is plenty of good moral teach-

ing, but it has little effect on the students, and when they enter into society they are as bad as anyone else. I don't know any power that can turn my character into steel instead of wood except the Christian church."

There were many more most interesting replies, all indicating that the influences of the eight days had brought the writers face to face with a new hope through knowledge of the living God and His Son and His church. Some of the answers are crude and imperfect, though the work of college men, but to one who has been working amongst the Chinese for nigh thirty years, they testify to the value of such comprehensive methods as this, prayerfully planned and executed to the glory of God and of His Son, Christ Jesus our Lord.

Seeing how the great theme was laying hold of the young men, the directors of the conference prepared two pledge cards, one of which read, "It is my desire to learn more about Christian teaching and life by studying the Bible and seeking the help of Christian teachers." This was signed by nine students.

The other, more far-reaching, read: "I hereby acknowledge God as my Father and Jesus as my Saviour and Lord, and declare my purpose, relying on His strength and following His example, to serve God and my fellow men with all my powers." This was signed by seven men, one of whom also declared his purpose of becoming a preacher of the Gospel, and has since suffered no little persecution from his aristocratic Confucian family.

Such were some of the practical results of eight days intelligent, co-operative, prayerful, believing labor with that hitherto unknown quantity the government student.

The entire body of 38 voted for a second

meeting next summer, and the three government agents, deputed by the viceroy of the province to attend all meetings and note anything of a political character that might tend to disturb the public peace, declared publicly that if this was Christianity the more that China had of it the better.

II. REV. F. W. BIBLE

One busy morning two callers were announced, and entering the living room, I was greeted by two well dressed and courteous gentlemen. I soon found difficulty in understanding them; that in itself is not an unusual experience, but these men were evidently speaking one of the northern dialects, so I asked my teacher to join us. After the usual polite preliminaries, one of them said that they had called to buy one of our Sacred books and a few books which explained the teachings. I was struck at once by the form of the question. There is a certain more or less technical vocabulary which is very early taken up by ordinary inquirers or those who have had much contact with Christians, which in the conversation of these men was almost entirely lacking. Since we carry several different editions of the Bible. I asked what kind they wished to buy, explaining the various sizes and prices. Then I asked what Christian books they wished and how many? "About a dollar's worth," they replied, "and of any kind which you recommend." Evidently they had not come from any of our evangelists or Christians or the inquiry would have been more specific. So in the most elaborate and polite phrases which I could master, I asked how it happened that my most unworthy home should receive a visit from two gentlemen so honorable and distinguished? Then came the story.

The two gentlemen were wine merchants, evidently on a large scale. Their home was in one of the provinces north and west from us. In a district some fifty miles from Hangchow, they had a wholesale purchasing branch, where they had been for some time. They were now in the city making a large shipment of wine to the north. This business, it seems, had brought them into contact with a certain official, whom I shall call Mr. Tsang. Mr. Tsang is in charge of a department in the internal revenue office of the province, and in some way the export of the wine brought these men to his office. The Inn at which they stopped was near his home and he invited them to call in the evening. They had done so and had witnessed a most remarkable thing. Instead of finding a company gathered for a social evening at Mr. Tsang's home, they found his household, including servants, and a group of his friends and neighbors gathered in a room, and Mr. Tsang was reading from a foreign book and explaining to the group the meaning of what he read. They had been invited primarily to hear this book, because Mr. Tsang seemed to attach an extraordinary importance to the book and its teaching, thinking evidently that it was really a vital matter that all Chinese should know it. They had had opportunity for only a couple of the readings and could not get very clearly in mind just what that teaching is, but they had never seen anything like this man Tsang. He seemed almost possessed with the idea of this book and its teaching. It seemed to be the most important thing in his life. Mr. Tsang had told them that I kept copies of the book and of little books which explained the teaching, and so they had come to me. After a simple talk I selected some books, called their attention to the fact that there

was a chapel in the town where their branch is located, and, taking their names and addresses, bade them good-bye. Then I began inquiries about Mr. Tsang. I recalled that a number of times a messenger had come with a request for certain books and that the servants had said once that he came from the Yamen or official residence. I found that Mr. Tsang was of rather high rank, though his present office was not of great importance; that he was reading and expounding the Scriptures in his own home almost daily; that by all the external evidence he was a follower of Jesus Christ, but was not in connection with any church and did not wish to be. He is in close touch with one or two Christian laymen and knows several of the pastors. He came to some special evangelistic meetings and brought some friends. But for church membership he would wait until the church should become more distinctly a Chinese institution. His position is taken quite openly, and so far as I can learn, it has not subjected him to any criticism on the part of his superiors. Strangely enough, the story leads back finally to a young Chinese girl, *a student in a school* maintained here by the C. M. S. She is a niece of Mr. Tsang. Her home is in a distant province. Through the influence of the teachers in the school she came to a most earnest and simple faith in Christ, and it was she who led Mr. Tsang to search for the truth.

There is both encouragement and occasion for serious thinking in the story. In some way the Christian church must become in the realest sense a Chinese institution and, quite as important, must clearly evidence itself as such before the people. Surely, when that is done, there will be a harvest of grain already ripened.

WHAT THE PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS IS DOING FOR THE YOUTH OF CHINA

In the seven missions of the Presbyterian Board in China, there are 359 institutions of learning embracing all grades from the kindergarten to the College and University. In these various schools are about 7,000 pupils. The mission of the Board in Hainan has 11 schools with over 300 pupils—South China has 52, with an enrollment of 1,619. The Province of Hunan has 15 schools of different grades with some 350 pupils. Central China has 28 and over 600 under tuition, while Kiangnan Mission, with only 12 schools, has an enrollment of about the same number. North China has 20 schools and 588 pupils, and the eight stations of the Shantung Mission report an enrollment of 2,646 pupils.

To give some very small idea of what is being done along evangelistic lines in these various schools, we will quote from the reports of a few of them.

Hainan Mission—"Paxton Training School."

"The school grows hand in hand with the evangelistic work of the station, and if the purpose for which the school was founded is clearly kept in mind it cannot ultimately fail to fulfil its mission, namely, of providing educated preachers of the Gospel for the island of Hainan."

"Albert J. Pitkin Memorial School."

"Our aim is to lead all young women and girls who become students in our school to a knowledge of Christ and to a consecration of their lives to his service; to give them such education as to provide native Christian teachers for the schools of Hainan, and to make them good housekeepers and intelligent wives and mothers."

*South China Mission—Canton Station—*The "True Light Seminary," of Canton, reports 240 professing Christians out of 312 pupils and adds, "The Seminary has sent out during the course of its existence more than 400 trained workers as teachers, Bible Women and other workers."

"The Fati Theological College" gives as the aim of the institution—"To raise up a native ministry, and to give a good solid Christian education to sons of Christians, to train teachers for mission and other schools, and to give a preparatory training to the future Christian doctors of the Province."

The aim of the "Hackett Medical College" with 48 pupils—women—is told in a few words—"To supply each large town in China with two Christian physicians."

From Lien Chou, a missionary writes—

"We propose to put a schoolhouse beside every chapel. Two new ones have been started this year. Those who regularly have this work and are able to give their whole time to it, have a unique opportunity in China to-day. Outside our own schools there is the chance to influence the Government schools, through their teachers, who are friendly and appreciative of any help we can give them."

Hunan Mission—Siangtan—"John D. Wells Boarding School for Boys."

"The tone of the school is becoming better each year. More than half of the boys attend a Y. M. C. A. meeting held each Sunday afternoon."

In the Boys' and Girls' Schools at Chenchow the religious atmosphere is marked.

"All seem interested in the Gospel, and former scholars are notably Christianizing their homes."

Central China Mission—

At the Orphanage in Yu-yao, "75 boys

are being trained and fitted for useful citizenship."

At *Hwai Yuen* are boarding schools for both boys and girls. "Most of the pupils will go from these schools to humble homes, and, for the present at least, the most important thing in their education is the laying of the basis of a sound Christian character, through familiarity with the Word of God and association with Christian people."

Shantung Mission—

Tsinanfu has 20 schools with 230 pupils. "On the staff of teachers, all are Christians." A hopeful outlook for the future men and women who are taught in these schools.

At *Tengchou* station last June was held a conference of the Y. M. C. A. workers which resulted in the organization of a National Student Volunteer Movement for the Christian ministry. The watchword of this band is, "The Gospel for China in this Generation."

Shantung Protestant University — Union work with Baptist Missionary Society of England, and Church of England. Consists of Arts College at Wei Hsien, Theological College at Ching-chou-fu, Medical College at Tsinanfu.

The reputation of the University is steadily increasing in China as an institution where the instruction is of an advanced and thorough character. Young men from this institution are in demand to establish institutions for higher education under the Chinese Government. The last report mentioned the fact that nearly all of the students were professing Christians. A live branch of the Y. M. C. A. is flourishing.

Nanking University — *Kiangnan Mission* — Methodist, Disciples and Presbyterians.

Seventy-five per cent. of the students are

Christians. The Volunteer Band numbers 70. These students are banded together for special prayer, and each week go out in groups preaching the Gospel. The faculty of the College believe it is their duty as Christian educators "to exalt the Gospel and the direct preaching of the Word, to get our Christian students to see that the burden of evangelization of China is upon them, and that the highest work to which they may be called by God is to preach Jesus Christ."

North China College at Peking — North China Mission—

Union with American Board and London Missionary Society.

Union College of Liberal Arts with the American Board Mission at Tungchou.

Union Lockhart Medical College—with the London Mission in Peking.

Union Gordon Memorial Theological College at Peking.

Union Woman's College, Peking, with American Board.

Purpose of the College—

1. The education of Christian students for direct Christian work, and—

2. The education of students under positive Christian conditions for all stations of life.

Hangchow College—Central China Mission—

Union of Northern and Southern Presbyterians.

The Board of Directors have formulated a plan of self-help. The students give from two to three hours per day in performing the manual labor connected with the College, while the road-making, gardening and care of the fruit trees is entrusted to another body of students; a practical plan whereby these young men can be fitted for more efficient work in the church and in the state.



FACULTY OF THE FATI THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, FATI, CANTON



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